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TO A PHRASE

I have been combing the sands of my thought for you—
You
Who left me the trace of your fragrance
In lieu of yourself,
A pungency as of sandalwood,
Or things lain long in lavender,
Very faint,
But of a stabbing sweetness.
Now that I have found you,
Your delicate coloring,
Which once delighted me,
Has faded in the wash of many tides.
Yet you can still
Sting the tears to my eyes,
Little Phrase-someone-said-to-me-long-ago,
Who might have meant so much
But who meant so little.

But I think—
I have untangled you from the seaweed of forgotten things,
I think I shall toss you back into the sea!

Hazel Hall